

*HB 274 – House Appropriations Committee  
Montana Outfitters and Guides Association  
Feb. 13, 2013*

HB 274 seeks legislative relief to reduce regulation, administrative burden, and cost to the licensees in the outfitting industry.

The fiscal note seeks to respond to the findings of the Legislative Economic Affairs Interim Committee meeting in January 2012, which found the following:

1. The Montana Board of Outfitters (MBO) has the third highest cost per licensee and has the highest indirect payment percentage.
2. Licensee total numbers have dropped from 2,462 FY 2010 to 1,671 FY 2011 or 32%.
3. With the drop in licensees combined with projected increase in budget for the Board of Outfitters for FY 2012, average price per licensee will increase from \$268 to \$385 or a 44% increase making it the 2nd highest license cost only behind CPAs.

What the many oversight groups do not likely know, of all the licensed industries under Dept. of Labor and Industry jurisdiction, the outfitting Industry must have amongst the lowest per capita income with an estimated 80% of the 1,671 licensees making less then \$20,000 from outfitting/guide revenue sources

#### Conclusion

The fiscal note shows a reduction in revenue for the MBO, but also a reduction in staff time. If current staff is reassigned to perform work for other board for 50% of their time, outfitters and guides license costs can be held in check and may eventually even be reduced. Some relief in the cost of licenses will likely result in hiring additional guides or contracting out some in-house responsibilities, ie bookkeeping, etc.

It is sensible and appropriate to bring the language and intent of Title 37 back into alignment with other licensed industries to improve efficiency, avoid unnecessary governmental administration, and right size cost to the cost of licenses for other professions. HB 274 does that and we ask for your approval. Thank you.